

\$3,000 TO WOMEN WHO SOLVE THIS MYSTERY.

THE MILL OF SILENCE.

By
BERNARD EDWARD JOSEPH CAFES.

CONDITIONS OF THE AWARD OF \$3,000.

1. To the reader from whom the Journal receives by mail at its publication office, Nassau street, New York City, the most complete and correct solution in all its details of the entire mystery in "The Mill of Silence," as it shall be disclosed in the final chapter of the story in the Journal, the sum of \$3,000 will be paid. The entire sum of \$3,000 will be divided into 120 prizes, as follows:
FOR THE BEST SOLUTION, \$1,000.
FOR THE SECOND BEST SOLUTION, \$500.
FOR THE THIRD BEST SOLUTION, \$300.
FOR THE FOURTH BEST SOLUTION, \$100.
In awarding the prizes there will be no change in the above table either as respects the number of prizes given or the amount of each prize.

2. The Journal is pre-eminently a family newspaper, and its daily instalment of a high-grade serial story is a feature intended specially to command it to the home circle. To emphasize the fact that the Journal is a newspaper particularly suitable for women's reading, the further condition is made that the \$3,000 in prizes shall be paid only for explanations sent in by WOMEN and GIRLS. All may read, but only WOMEN and GIRLS may guess—and win the \$3,000.
3. "The Mill of Silence" will continue in daily instalments until Thursday, May 23, on which date all but the final chapter will have been published. The interval between Thursday, May 23, and Friday, June 6, inclusive, will be allowed for the forwarding of guesses. For no reason whatever will guesses be received and considered after 6 o'clock p. m., Friday, June 6. The final instalment of the story, disclosing the mystery, will be published in the Journal, Monday, June 8.

RULES OF THE COMPETITION.

1. But ONE solution may be entered by any one reader.
2. All guesses must be sent by mail and in no other way, plainly addressed to "Prize Story Editor, THE JOURNAL, Nassau street, New York City."
3. Inquiries not considered fully answered here will be answered in THE JOURNAL, if the inquiries are addressed to "The Prize Story Editor" and accompanied by a two-cent stamp or postal card.
4. The \$3,000 will be awarded under the conditions and rules here set forth, and according to the best judgment of the judges appointed by THE JOURNAL, and these judges will have complete control and final decision beyond all appeal in all matters relating to this contest, and all "solutions" will be received and judged subject to this provision.
5. The guesses may be in the reader's own words, in the English language, and without any attempt at "fine writing" and without reviewing the story at length—simply attempting to give as many facts and details as will make up "the most complete and correct solution" as called for in Condition No. 1. Guesses must disclose the mystery and such material facts of the plot revealed in the development of the story as may be deemed necessary by the judges to a clear and full explanation of the mystery in its details.
6. Names and addresses of the winners of the \$3,000 in cash prizes will be published in THE JOURNAL at the earliest possible date after the judges have determined the winners.
7. No condition of term of subscription to THE JOURNAL is imposed. Guessers must be women and girls, and necessarily they must be readers of THE JOURNAL, but they may read the story in THE JOURNAL taken by any member of the family and need not be regular subscribers themselves in order to enter the competition. While only women and girls may guess and win the prizes, they may receive help in their guessing from any or all members of the family.

A Supplement of the Journal containing the first seven chapters of "The Mill of Silence" will be mailed to any address upon receipt of a two cent stamp.

Chap. XLI.—Across the Water.

For an instant the blood in my arteries seemed to stop, so that I gasped when I tried to speak.

"What boy was that?" I said, in a forced voice, when I could command myself.

"What boy?—oh?—what boy?" his eyes were wandering up and down the wall again. "Him, I say, as they buried quick—yonder Trender of the mill."

"How do you know he was buried alive? How could he have been if he was murdered?"

"How do I know? He was murdered, I say. I'm George White, the sexton—and what I know, I know."

"And the Doctor murdered him?"

"Don't I say so?"

He had hardly spoken, when he put his hand to his head, moved a step back and stood staring at me with horror-stricken, infernal eyes.

"My God!" he muttered. "He whispered there into the pit that if I said to another what I said to him I were as good as a dead man."

The panic increased in him. I could see the tortured soul moving, as it were, behind the flesh of his face. When the nerve of endurance snapped he staggered and fell forward in a fit.

Helpless to minister to a convulsion that gripped him, I ran round to the police station, which was but a short distance away, and gave information of the seizure I had witnessed. A stretcher was sent for the poor, racked wretch, he was carried away spluttering and writhing, and so for the time being my chance of questioning him further was ended.

But there and then I walked abroad, into the open fields, resolutely putting the matter from me until I should be alone with my thoughts. The fury of the rain gust had passed by, the sky still frowned with storm and sent forth a hollow growl now and again, as it withdrew, during the earth, over its shoulder, into the dusky caves of the evening.

In the wide drenched meadows I paused and sought inspiration of the winds.

Knew, plainly and solemnly: Had I been face to face with an awful fragment of the truth, or had I been but the chance bearer of certain delicious ravings on the part of a drink-sodden wretch—ravings as business as the unsubstantial horror of which he had sung his song?

Just the latter seemed the more probable was due to an obvious inconsistency on the part of the half-insane creature. If the boy had been murdered, how could he have been buried alive? Moreover, it was evident that the sexton was near a monomaniac on the subject of living interments. Moreover, secondly, it was altogether improbable and not to be accounted for that the keen-witted Doctor should intrust a serious and perilous case to such a confederate. And what object had he to gain by the destruction of Moldred, beyond the satisfying of a little private rancor perhaps? An object quite incompatible with the fearful danger of the deed.

On the other hand, I could not but recall darkly that the sexton, on the morning when, apparently sane and sensible, he had conducted me to my brother's grave, had thrown out certain vague hints and implications, which, hardly noticed by me at the time, assumed a lurid aspect in the light of his more definite charge; that, by Zyp's statement to me after my illness, it would seem that Dr. Crackenhorpe had shown some eagerness and made voluntary offer of his services in the matter of hauling up the whole question of Moldred's death; that it was not impossible that he also had discovered the boy's knowledge of the secret of the hiding-place and had jumped at a ready opportunity for alienating forever an unwelcome confederate.

Stung to sudden anxious terror by this thought, I broke into a hurried walk, vigorous motion to coax into the order of progression the dread that so tore and worried my sooner might I stay the tower's coming about me than hope the fog that lagged all my in a tangled avowal of cowardice like one who walks in a fit waste, hearing inarticulate sin and derision about him, but rather their import.

I found that, striding on, I was entering that part of the road wherein lay the pool of unanities. It shone there before me, or rent in the grass, the shadow of willow smouldered upon its surface against the trunk of the tree that stood on the further side of the water a long, dusky figure was leaning motionless.

It was that of the man who was most in my thoughts; and, looking at him, even at that distance, something repellant in his aspect seemed to connect him fittingly with the stormy twilight around him that was imagined in my soul.

Straight I walked down to the water's edge and called him, and, though he made no response, I saw consciousness of my presence stir in him.

"I want a word with you!" I called.

"Shall I shout it across the river?" He slowly detached himself from his position and sauntered down to the margin over against me.

"Proclaim all from the house-tops, where I am concerned," he answered in a loud voice. "Who is it wants me, and what has he to say?"

"You know me, I suppose?"

"I have not that pleasure, I believe?"

"Never mind. I have just come from talk with a confederate of yours—the sexton of St. John's."

"I know the man certainly. Is he in need of my services?"

"He would say 'God forbid' to that, I fancy. He's had enough of you, maybe."

"Oh, in what way?"

"In the way of silencing awkward witnesses."

"Tray, be a trifle less obscure."

"I have this moment left him. He was seized with a fit of some sort. He'd rather have the devil himself to wait upon him than you, I expect."

"Why so?"

"I had some talk with him before he went off his head. Do you want to know what he charged you with?"

"Certainly I do."

"Murder!"

Dr. Crackenhorpe looked at me across the water a long minute; then, never taking his eyes off my face, lifted up the skirts of his coat and began to shamble and jerk out the most ludicrous parody of a dance I have ever seen. The inconceivable grotesqueness and awkwardness of his actions, set against a solemn background of hills and laboring dark clouds, it were impossible to do justice to in description. His narrow shanks dangled in the air like tails; his body, writhed as it with coils, seemed to crack as he bent it; his long shanks flapped and spun about him after the manner of a flag flogged by the wind against his staff. Then, all of a sudden, he stopped and was doubled up in a suffocating rattle of laughter.

Presently, recovering himself—he had nothing to wipe from those dry springs in his head, as an honest man would have after such display of merriment—he walked off down the bank to a point where the stream narrowed, and motioned me to come opposite him.

"It's not from fear of you and your sexton," he explained, still gasping out dry dust of his humor. "Your exquisite pleasantry has weakened my vocal chords—that's all."

I treated him to a long stare of most sovereign contempt. For all his assumed enjoyment, I fancied he was pretty observant of my mood, and that he was calculating the nature of the charge I had fired at him.

"And whom did I murder?" he said, making a great show of mopping his face with his handkerchief.

"Say it was my brother Moldred."

"I'm glad, for your sake, to hear you qualify it. I presume you to be the one of that pleasant family of Trender, who have a local reputation none of the sweetest."

He came down close to the water's edge—were but a little distance apart there—and shook a long finger at me.

"My friend, my friend," he said, sternly, "your excuse must be the hot-headedness of youth. For the sake of your father, who once enjoyed my patronage, I will forbear answering a fool according to his folly. For his sake I will be gentle and convincing, where it is my plain duty, I am afraid, to chastise. This man you speak of is a heavy

drinker, and is now, by your own showing, on the verge of delirium tremens. Do you take the gross imaginings of such a person for gospel?"

"Dr. Crackenhorpe," I said quietly, "your threats fall on stony ground. I admit the man is hardly responsible for his statements at the present moment; only, as it happens, I have met and spoken with him before."

I thought I could see in the gathering darkness his lip curled inward, as if with a twitch of pain.

"And did he charge me then with murdering your brother?"

"He said what, viewed in the light of his after outburst, has awakened grave suspicions in me."

He threw back his head with a fresh cackle of laughter.

"Suspicious!" he cried. "Is that all?"

It's natural to have then, perhaps, I had

Chap. XLII.—Jason's Second Visit.

It behooves me now to pass over a period of two years, during which so little happened that bore directly upon the fortunes of any concerned in this lamentable history that to touch upon them would be to specify merely the number-of-fact occurrences of ordinary daily life. To me they were an experience of peace and rest such as I had never yet known, I think—a long sleep on the broad sands of forgetfulness, whitherward the storm had cast me, and from which it was to tear me by and by with redoubled fury and mangle and devour my heart in gluttonous ferocity.

But then my dreams were peace, and the figures of the past walked through them, the silent and sorrowful like the ghosts of old happiness, and I could find beauty in them even as bloodshed becomes picturesque in ancient romances. For if the

vision of a personality pitifully fallen and degraded during those thirty months or so of absence. It was not only that the mere animal beauty of it was conserved and debauched into a parody of itself, but that its informing spirit was so blunted by indulgence as to have lost forever that pathetic dignity of despair, with which a bounding persecution had once inspired it. Jason had become a sensual thing of clay, with a haunting grievance, and it was obvious, had long learned to seek, by way of the course that had already ruined my father, a mood and fatal success of his misery.

As I looked at him, at his dull, bloodshot eyes and loose pendulous lower lip, my heart hardened in spite of myself and I had difficulty in addressing him with any show of civility.

"Now," I said, "what next?"

He stared at me quite expressionless and away where he stood. He was stupid and sudden with drink, it was evident.

"Let's go home," he said. "I'm heavy for sleep as a hedgehog in the sun."

I set my lips and pushed him onward. It was hopeless entirely to think of questioning him as to the reason of his sudden re-appearance, and under such circumstances, in his present state. The most I could do was to get him within the mill as quietly as possible, and settle him somewhere to sleep off his debauch.

In this I was successful beyond my expectations, and not even my father, who lay resting in his room—as he often did now in the hot afternoons—knew of his return till late in the evening.

And while Jason lay on my bed, tumbled as he had thrown himself in his bestial stupor, I sat by the window, revolving darkly the meaning of this ugly reversion that had thrown its shadow upon our lives once more.

In the fresh gloom of the evening he stirred and woke. His brain was still clouded, but he was in, I supposed, such right senses as he ever enjoyed now. At the sound of his moving I came and stood over him. He stared at me for a long time in silence, as he lay.

"Do you know where you are?" I said at last.

"Renny—by the saints!" He spoke in a dry, parched whisper. "It's the mill, isn't it?"

"Yes; it's the mill. I brought you here filthy with drink, after you'd tried to throw yourself under a train and thought better of it."

He struggled wildly into a sitting posture and his eyes blinked with horror.

"I thought of it all the way in the train—coming up from London," he said in a shrill underbreath. "When I got out at the station I had some more—the last straw, I suppose—for I wandered, and found myself above the place—and the devil drove me down to do it."

"Well, you repented it seems."

"I couldn't—when I heard it. And the very wind of it seemed to tear at me as it passed."

"What brought you to London? I thought you were still abroad."

He fell to whimpering and beating the bedclothes. His hands and his lips trembled. He was suffering all the torture of the reaction from drunken excitement.

"What drove me? What always drives me? That cruel, persecuting demon!"

"He found you out over there, then?"

"I can't hide from him. I've never had a week of rest and peace after that first year. It was all right then. I threw upon the miserable surplus of the stuff you lent me and won. For six months we lived like fighting cocks. We dressed the young 'un in the color that brought us luck. My soul, she's a promising chick, Renny. You're her uncle, you know; you can't go back from that."

"Where did he come across you?"

"In a kiosk at Homburg. We were down in the month then. Six weeks of lentils and sour bread. I saw him looking at me across the petits chevaux table—course his brute's face! We never got rid of him after that. Give me a drink. My heart's dancing like a pea on a drum."

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mine of you once, you know."

"You lie there, of course. By your own confession, you lie."

"And now," he went on, ignoring my interruption, "they are diverted to another."

"Will you answer me a question or two?"

"If they are put with a proper sense of decorum I will give them my consideration."

"Do you know where my father keeps the treasure, the bulk of which you have robbed him of?"

"Most offensively worded. But I will hu-

world lay cold and dead about me, I felt that the seed of hope might still elude the unpurifying germ of blossom beneath the new soft fallen mask of snow upon the mountains and the moors." I found some pleasure of a melancholy kind in the retrospect of that struggle with the angel of destiny, in which the manhood in me had never succumbed, stricken down as my weaker mortality might have been. And I thought the worst was past, and that now it remained for me only to reorder the methods of my life on a system of plainest duty and sober relaxation in which the license of imagination should have no place whatsoever.

Alas! Whom the gods find patient under adversity they strike again. There are no Philistines like your fates for piling pains on the fortunate—Pellon on Ossa. It is so easy for Rothschilds to be rich; saints to be good. They say our honorable fail-

ures are well down by the autobiography of Olympus to our credit, but so are the condescensions of the fortunate, who give away a tithe of their gifts, to theirs. And the favors of the gods carry all the virtues with them.

At this period I was but a young fellow of twenty-six, and my experiences had been such as a man might think himself wretched to have distributed over a long lifetime. Yet destiny, unwearied of its merciless sport of baiting the crippled, was even now preparing its amphitheatre for a final display, in which the torment of many lives it had ruined should mingle in one last red catastrophe.

As yet, however, the moment had not come, and I lived and went my way in peace and resignation.

The first forewarning came one September afternoon of that second year of rest. I had been butterfly hunting about the meadows that lay to the west of the city, when a particularly fine specimen of the second brood of Brimstone tempted me over some railings that hedged in the ridge of a railway cutting that here bisected the chalky slopes of pasture land. I was cautiously approaching my settled quarry, not in hand, when I started with an exclamation that lost me my prize.

On the meadow, some distance below, a man whose attitude seemed somehow familiar to me, was standing.

I shaded my eyes with my hand and looked down, with bewilderment and a little fear constricting my heart.

He stood very still, staring up the line, and a thickness came in my throat, so that I could not for the moment call to him as I wanted to. For there was an ominous

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mor you. I never had need!" he shot out an evil smile—"of obtaining my share of the good things by other than legitimate means."

"Do you know?"

"No, I don't, upon the honor of a gentleman."

"Did my brother that's dead know?"

"Really, you tempt me to romance to satisfy your craving for information. I was not in your brother's confidence."

"He found you out over there, then?"

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